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of sleeping on, or a single large bamboo mat, besides a quantity of old clothes, blankets, pillows, and rags scattered about or hanging from the rough ends of the walls. At either the front or back of the large outer room, whichever is toward the east—the place of honor in a Karen house—is a raised platform called the "hso hko." This is about a cubit's height from the floor and has a mat on it worn shiny with much sitting. It is the place where guests are received, especially if they are people of note. Here against the wall are a few pillows, which may be half-round bamboos of giant size, that is, from eight to ten inches in diameter, or cloth pillows filled with fibre from the cotton tree *(Bombax heterophylla)*. The guest is invited to sit on the platform and to partake of the contents of the fragrant betel-box, which is sure to be hospitably pushed in front of him. The cradle usually hangs from the crossbeams in the middle of the room, being held up by fibre ropes, although occasionally elephant chains are called into use to give full measure of security. The cradle itself may be a blanket swung up at the four corners, or it may be part of the trunk of a large hollow tree. A basket-work cradle is scarcely ever found in old Karen homes.

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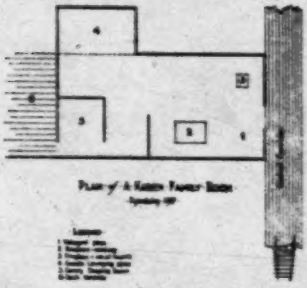

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343 At the back of the family apartment the bamboo joists and flooring project several feet beyond the wall, forming a primitive back veranda where clothes are hung to dry; rice (paddy), fish, fruit, and vegetables are set out in the sun, and other domestic operations are carried on in private.

345 575 In a few Karen villages a young men's club-room ("blaw") is still maintained, but not in most. Where such a room exists, it does not differ in general appearance from a family-room, except that it has no partitions. The hearth in the middle of the space serves as a social fireside on cold mornings and evenings. At the east end a raised dais extends the width of the room, being used both for reception and for sleeping purposes. Guests, unless closely related to some family in the village, usually sleep here, except when, as a mark of respect, they are invited to sleep in a room apart on the "hso hko" with the men of the house. Women guests sleep in the family sleeping-room together with the women folk and children.

342 177 The old type of Karen village-house, such as we have been describing above, is being modified by contact with the Burmese

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ment cuts little or no figure in the arrangement. The parties to a r arriage expect to live together and take the affair as a matter of course. At the beginning they have no affection for each other, but through parenthood they become united in mutual love and, as the years pass while their family grows up about them, they are bound together as securely as if they had married in the Occidental and more romantic way.

In a Karen family children are desired and expected. To grow old and remain childless is regarded as a great misfortune. Boys are much preferred, but girls are not disliked as much as in China and some other parts of the world where they are abandoned. The child early accompanies its mother to the field or wherever she may go. In infancy it is slung in a blanket on her back, but later rides on her hip until long after it is able to walk. (See page 172.)

Family relationships are not neglected among the Karen people, although they do not seem to keep genealogical records or to remember ancestors back of their grandparents. However, they are particular in taking account of, and displaying regard for, their contemporary relatives. The grandfather and grandmother, both paternal and maternal, are called "hpü" and "hpi," respectively. Great uncles and great aunts receive the same designations. The father and mother are, respectively, "pa" and "mo." Children are called "hpo," the root of this word meaning "little." Sons are "hpo hkwa" and daughters, "hpo mü." Contrary to the Occidental custom of grouping brothers and sisters according to sex, a Karen ordinarily groups them according to whether they are younger or older than himself. Older brothers and sisters are "weh" and younger "hpü." If he desires to specify whether they are male or female, he employs the usual masculine and feminine designations, commonly adding one or the other of the words given above for son and daughter. Thus, for elder sister he says "weh hpo mü" and for younger brother "hpü hpo hkwa." While there are definite words for cousin, uncle, and aunt, namely, "t'khwa," "hpa hti," and "mügha," respectively, these are often loosely used. Any man or woman older than one's self may be called uncle or aunt as, for example, among the negroes in the United States. The word "weh," signifiying older brothers and sisters, as also the correlative word "hpü," designating younger brothers and sisters, are often used of cousins and more distant relatives. For instance, a cousin, called "weh," is usually one whose father or mother was an older brother or sister to one of the speaker's parents. "Hpü" would similarly

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triplets are also thought to share the "k'la" among them, but I am not sure as I have not made inquiry concerning such cases.

846

It is common for Karen women in Lower Burma who are recovering from child-birth, to observe the custom that prevails among the Burmese, namely, to have a fire on an improvised hearth or in a brasier set near the mat on which they lie. The fire is kept burning constantly for several days or a week after their confinement, to assist them in regaining their strength. The hotter their rooms are kept, the more quickly they are supposed to recover their strength.

CHILDHOOD

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The period of childhood is a short one among the Karen.[1] The baby early accompanies its mother on her journeys from place to place or to work, slung on her back by means of an old blanket or skirt. When she puts the infant down, she improvises a hammock out of this cloth by tying ropes to its corners and swinging it from the rafters of the house or the little hut in the field or from the branches of a tree. When the child grows a little older he plays about, while his mother is at work; and when he goes with her he rides on her hip. (See p. 172.) She does not always give up carrying her first child on the arrival of the second. More than once I have seen a mother struggling along with a smaller child on her back and a larger one astride of her hip.

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The play of Karen children, more than that of the little folk of more advanced races, is imitative of the work of their elders. With little in the way of toys they gather a few bits of broken jars, which the girls utilize to cook rice in. The boys induce their father or some other male relative to make for them miniature bows and arrows, slings, and spears with which they assail dogs and crows, as well as small game along the edge of the jungle clearing. Streams afford places for them to play in the water or try for fish. With the sap of the banyan (bird-lime) smeared on a bamboo they may catch a crow for a pet. They tie together two bamboos, plantain stocks, or black bottles and lead them about as a yoke of oxen,

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[1] On account of the fact that the Karen do not keep accurate age records, and also because of the shyness of the youth, it is difficult to obtain exact information as to when the children come to the age of puberty. The ages usually given me have been twelve for the girls and a year or two later for the boys. Two cases of arrested development of girls have come under my notice. Both of these died when they were reported to have been about sixteen or seventeen, and both were reported never to have had any periods. One appeared to be not more than a girl of nine or ten, while the other was larger but was emaciated and had defective eyes.

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857 and in various ways manage to get a good deal of fun out of the few years elapsing before they have to assume their share of the labor in the field and the village.

Girls and young maidens are early trained to assist their mothers, especially in carrying up the water needed for domestic

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CHILD RIDING ON ITS MOTHER'S HIP
The youngster does not like to face the camera so well as his mother. He is riding on her hip, which is the common method of carrying children all through the Orient. A silver earring can be seen in the mother's right ear.

524 857 uses. Their imitative play is, therefore, largely devoted to doing some of the things they see their mothers do. Besides this play at house-keeping they have other pastimes. Thus, when they hear the

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221. KAREN VILLAGE.

K 241

in small numbers, chiefly as pilgrims to the Buddhist shrines, of which the chief is the Shwe Dagôn, in Rangoon (p. 188).

The Karéns are the most important hill-race of the country, and best exemplify the mode of life of the quasi-aboriginal tribes, whom Burmans, Taláings, and Shans have kept out of the plain-land. The "white Karéns," Sghaw (*Sgharaw*) and Pwo, occupy the mountains between Burma and Siam. They have colonies in mountains far to the east and west, and have also spread into the plains adjoining. They call themselves *Baganyáw* (*Bgharaganyáw*), and call the Burmans *Bayán*. The Burmans call them *Kayín*, and familiarly *Tha-ngè-dyín*—playmate, in much the same way as we say "Jack Burman" and "John Chinaman." The Karéns get their living by making hill-forest clearings (*taungya*), on which they raise one crop, and remove to fresh sites every season.

K 177

On the fringe of the mountain tracts the Karéns are more or less Burmanized, and practise Buddhism, being attracted by the prestige of the religion, with its great festivals in which everyone is free to share—especially now that they can mingle in the towns without fear of their quondam oppressors. The barbarous *tágwín*, which the Burmans themselves are beginning to disuse, is one of the first marks of the contact of the Karén with the dominant race. The Karéns settled in the lowlands are known as Taláing-Kayín, and Bamâ-Kayín. The men know Burmese, and dress like Burmans.

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The Karén is noted for truthfulness and chastity. The former characteristic is probably to be accounted for by absence of coercive *régime*, their society being, as Macpherson says of the Khonds, pervaded by

222. KAREN MOTHER AND BABE.